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## United States Department of Agriculture,

U. S. BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,  
SA  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

### ORGANIZATION AND INSTRUCTION IN BOYS' CORN-CLUB WORK,<sup>1</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION.

The boys' corn-club work is a definite effort by the United States Department of Agriculture, the State agricultural colleges, and other institutions to promote and encourage the increased production of corn at a reasonable cost on small areas and to offer a plan of vocational guidance by requiring club members to master a complete corn-crop operation. This begins with the selection of suitable seed and follows the operation to marketing or feeding and includes the making up of a complete crop report of the work, its cost and expenses. In this work we believe that the profit on the investment is as important as the matter of yield.

The future of American agriculture is largely dependent on the boys and girls of to-day, and it is the purpose of this corn-club movement to assist the other forces now at work to interest, instruct, and direct the boys of our villages and rural communities in the possibilities of farming as a profitable and dignified profession.

Corn growing on the 1-acre basis is used as the medium of instruction and interest. As a field crop of interest and cash value it has

<sup>1</sup> This circular is prepared for use in the Northern and Western States.

The rules and regulations governing the age, acreage, basis of award, methods of measurement, and general club requirements are the same in all States. The administration of the club work through the two offices mentioned is adapted by them in each case to local conditions.

no superior. From the standpoint of its economical relation to farm management it will encourage diversified farming, soil building by rotation of crops, the feeding of hogs, the keeping of other live stock, etc., and is considered one of the most profitable field crops grown in the grain States. The interest the boys take in the work is well illustrated in figure 1.



FIG. 1.—A Wisconsin club winner and his prize bushel of seed corn.

#### SOME OBJECTS OF CORN CLUBS.

Some of the objects of corn clubs are as follows:

- (1) To encourage more intensive farming by using the best known methods of soil building, selection of seed, seed testing, cultivation of corn, etc.

(2) To offer a medium through which vocational guidance inspiration, information, and careful direction can be given to the average boy now in rural life.

(3) To adapt the boy to his agricultural environments and make him capable of self-expression within those environments.

(4) To teach the value of intellectual guidance, careful observation, cultural comparison and investigation, and the need of a broader education for the farming population.

(5) To teach the boy the proper adaptation of plant life to local climatic and soil conditions.

(6) To assist the teacher and the public school to find an easy approach, educationally, to all the interests of rural and village life.

(a) The club acre should be the laboratory for the club member and



FIG. 2.—First corn-club exhibit at Bowling Green, Warren Co., Ky.

the demonstration plat for the farmer. (b) The club work becomes the connecting link between parent and teacher, farm and school, and last but not least, it forms a cooperative atmosphere in which rural boys may be developed to the highest ideals of rural life.

Figure 2 shows a Warren County, Ky., corn-club exhibit. Exhibits of this kind have done much to stimulate the club interest.

While the chief purpose of corn-club work is crop production, as outlined by the Bureau of Plant Industry, it does not follow that all the other character-building and habit-forming agencies are left out of the equation. It is clearly the purpose of this organization to reach the boy and endeavor through instruction and direction in contests and friendly rivalry to encourage a training which is "four square," viz, the education of the head, heart, and hands, and the

improvement of the health of the entire membership. Figure 3 shows the corn-club emblems: (a) Corn-club emblem; (b) all-star emblem.

It is the purpose of the Office of Farm Demonstration to cooperate with the States in the promotion of club interests with local supervision. The first organization for cooperative club work between the States and the United States Department of Agriculture was perfected eight years ago in Mississippi. Since this time there has been a growing interest and an increasing spirit of cooperation in the

interest of better agriculture. All forces seem to feel that there is plenty to do for all and that true cooperation and teamwork is the only safe and sure policy to pursue in all rural-life activities.

#### CLUB-ORGANIZATION WORK.

It is very important to have the field carefully organized in connection with the boys' corn-club work. In addition to an efficient State leader and organizer, arrangements should be made to have the county school superintendent or some other available leader in the county charged with the duty of supervising and promoting the club work within the county. This county leader in turn can appoint a township leader who will be, in a measure, responsible for the success of the work in the township. The township leader should also be authorized, if necessary, to appoint



FIG. 3.—Emblems of Boys' Corn Club and All-Star Corn Club.

a teacher or leader in each individual school district who will agree to enroll the members and visit club plats and offer encouragement and instruction to the members during the growing season. Through this district leader the boys' and girls' club work in the school district should be organized into a local club with officers, such as president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, supervisor, and program committee.

Arrangements should be made to hold one club meeting every month, either in the afternoon or evening, as may best suit the needs

and convenience of the particular district. For this organization a short and easily interpreted constitution and set of by-laws should be adopted. They should provide for the conduct of the meetings and should outline the general plan of the program work for the year. The program should be, first of all, in the interest of the particular club work. Subjects assigned and discussed should pertain to corn culture in its various phases. Debates should be held on the merits of different methods of cultivation, treatment for insects, diseases, etc., and as to the best kind of farm implements to be used in the various lines of work in corn culture, etc. The secretary of the local club should be instructed to send his report of the club meeting for each month to the State agent in charge of the club work. This may be in the form of a personal letter or on a formal blank suggested by the State agent in charge.

A complete enrollment of club members and their standing should be kept by the local club, a copy of which should be sent to the State agent in charge, who in turn will transmit a copy of the enrollment, giving correct post-office addresses and rural-delivery numbers, to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Enrollment blanks and cards will be furnished by the Department on application.

#### CLUB ENROLLMENT.

All club enrollments should be listed alphabetically by States and counties. The name of the county agent, county superintendent, teacher, or local leader who has been instrumental in organizing the club and in getting the enrollment should be placed at the head of the club enrollment. Club enrollments will be kept on the membership roll for but one year, unless the State agent requests the continuation of the club members after he has secured a revision of the club enrollment and found that all members desire to continue for the second year.

When club members have reached their nineteenth birthday, they will be barred from junior-club membership, but will be permitted to enter as field demonstrators or cooperators in connection with the work in field studies and demonstrations with adult farmers. Every boy must plan his own crop and do his own work. A small or frail boy may hire help for heavy plowing in the preparation of his seed bed. The land and corn must be carefully measured in the presence of at least two disinterested witnesses, who must sign the certificate and crop report of the club member.

#### RULES AND REQUIREMENTS.

The age requirement for the boys' corn-club work is from 10 to 18 years, inclusive, and the club member must agree to follow instruc-

tions, attend local and county meetings, make exhibits of corn at the county fair or other institution convenient to the exhibitor, keep a record of expenses, income, observations, and work, and encourage others to enter the corn-club work. At the close of the growing season he must also make out the regular crop report on the blank form furnished for this purpose by the Department of Agriculture and transmit the same to the State agent in charge of the club work or, where there is no State agent, he must send the crop report to the county superintendent or direct to the Office of Farm Demonstration, Bureau of Plant Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

#### ACREAGE AS A BASIS FOR CLUB WORK.

In all farm operations an acre is considered the basis of work. All estimates in the business of farming are by the acre. It is therefore advisable that the boys' corn-club work maintain a uniformity throughout the States in taking an acre as a basis of corn-club work. This does not interfere with a larger acreage. In fact, club members are urged to farm more land wherever possible.

The object of the work on the 1 acre, however, is to limit the work to a piece of land that can be properly prepared, fertilized, and managed during the growing season. It must be distinctly understood that the corn-club acre is a *demonstration acre* and has for its ultimate aim the demonstration of the values of better methods of corn culture and to make the boy feel that he is doing a part of the world's work. Fractional acreage for corn-club work is not encouraged. In the case of a special demand being made for half-acre plats in certain localities where the acreage is limited, this work should be classified as a "special contest" and not denominated as regular club work. Special premiums should be provided for the half-acre contest work, and contestants of this class will not be in competition with the acre class. The acre should contain 160 square rods, or 4,840 square yards, and should provide for a margin of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet on the four sides of the acre plat between the first row of corn and the marginal lines of the acre.

#### HOW TO ESTIMATE THE YIELD.

Gather the corn on a dry day and weigh it. Weigh out two lots of 100 pounds each from different parts of the total quantity. Shell each lot and weigh the shelled corn separately. In order to find the percentage of shelled corn divide by 2 the sum of the two weights thus obtained. Then multiply the total weight of all the corn gathered by this average percentage and divide by 56. This will give the number of bushels of shelled corn.

### MOISTURE TEST.

Every boy whose yield would entitle him to close competition for the prize trip to Washington, D. C., and the champion position in county, district, or State should submit a sample of his grain for the moisture test, as provided by the following rule:

The corn must be weighed in the presence of two disinterested witnesses, who shall immediately after weighing take a fair sample of 1 quart of shelled corn (1 pint from each sample lot weighed), place this sample in the moisture-tight package at once, and mail it in this container to the United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Grain Standardization, Washington, D. C., or to one of the grain-standardization laboratories outside of Washington designated by the State agent in charge of the club work. Moisture-tight mailing supplies will be furnished by the United States Department of Agriculture upon application from the State leader or club member. This sample of shelled corn must be accompanied by a certificate of the total weight and percentage of shelled corn. The moisture test shall be made from this sample, and from the weight and moisture test the percentage of shelled corn will determine the official yield of the club member. Yields are to be calculated to a uniform basis of 12 per cent of moisture. This is about the normal moisture content of old and well-cured corn during the summer months.

### GRAIN STANDARDIZATION.

Club members ranging in age from 14 to 18 years should be encouraged to do some work in grain standardization. The classification of corn and small grains in their respective classes for seed and for market offers a splendid opportunity for educational work in the value of corn. Special instructions along this line can be secured by making application direct to the Office of Grain Standardization, United States Department of Agriculture.

### CHAMPIONSHIP CONTESTS.

#### BASIS OF AWARD.

The State, district, and county championship in the boys' corn-club work should be determined on the following basis:

(1) Greatest yield per acre-----	30
(2) Best showing of profit on investment-----	30
(3) Best exhibit of 10 ears at county, district, or State fair-----	20
(4) Best written history or account, entitled "How I made my corn crop"-----	20
Total score-----	100

The written history should be transmitted, together with the crop report, to the State agent in charge of club work, who will grade and secure evidence with reference to the crop report and the grading for the best exhibit of 10 ears at the county, district, or State fair.

Figure 4 shows a prize-winning exhibit of 10 ears; figure 5, a single-ear prize winner; and figure 6, four booklets (9 by 11 inches) written and illustrated by club members.

#### THE ALL-STAR CORN CLUB.

*Eligibility.*—All corn-club members who have won the championship of a State or district, as denominated by the State agent in charge of club work, are entitled to life membership in the "All-Star Corn Club," and after January 1, 1913, all club members who show a record of 100 bushels per acre at an average cost per bushel of not

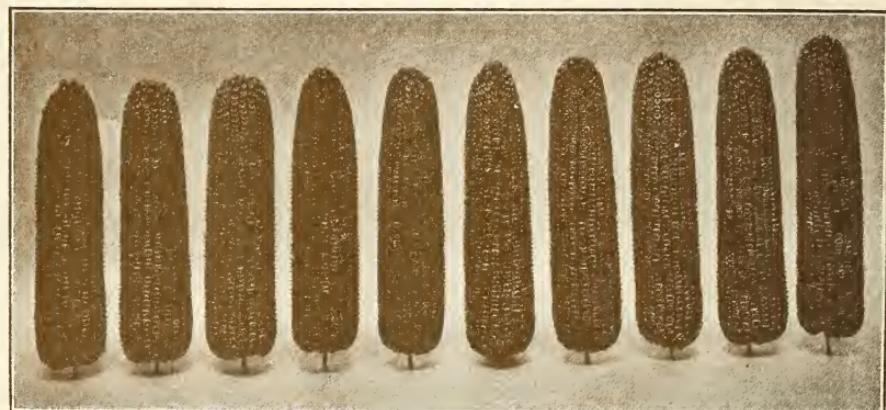


FIG. 4.—A prize-winning exhibit of ten ears of corn, champion of Iowa State Corn Show, 1906.

more than 20 cents will also be entitled to life membership. All-Star Corn Club members are to be given special consideration in the work of rural and agricultural leadership in their home counties and districts. They are also entitled to attend all meetings, banquets, socials, etc., of the district, State, and All-Star Corn Clubs without written or special invitation.

The State agent in charge of club work, the superintendent of agricultural extension of the State agricultural and mechanical college, and the officer of the United States Department of Agriculture in charge of club work of the territory shall constitute the membership committee to determine the eligibility of corn-club members to the "All-Star Corn Club." The officers of the United States Department of Agriculture who have charge of or are directing the club work and all State, district, and county agents in charge of club work will be considered honorary members and will be entitled to a voice in all meetings, but will have no vote in business meetings.

Members of All-Star Corn Clubs should operate not less than 2 acres of corn and, as soon as possible, their work should be extended to the more advanced studies in agriculture and farm management. Field studies in crop rotation, methods of soil building, seed selection, special seed-breeding plats, standardization of grains, cross-breeding, ear-to-row tests, etc., should engage some of their time and energy for each succeeding year. We look to this select membership to do the advanced and constructive work in agriculture.

BASIS OF AWARD FOR ALL-STAR CORN CLUBS.

(1) Greatest average yield per acre--	20
(2) Best showing of profit on investment -----	20
(3) Leadership work during year, such as club enrollments secured, members visited, meetings, etc-----	20
(4) Quantity and grade of advanced work taken up during past season-----	20
(5) Best exhibit of corn, special work, and written report of work -----	20
Total score -----	100

A failure to comply with club requirements for three consecutive years will bar anyone from continuing as a member. The membership can not be restored.

*Exceptions to the membership rules.*—The foregoing rules apply to all members who live upon and operate a farm of 2 or more acres. All members who, owing to the force of circumstances, change from farming to college, professional, or business activities will be considered active members so long as they continue to show interest and to give their cooperation and moral support to all rural-life and agricultural activities.

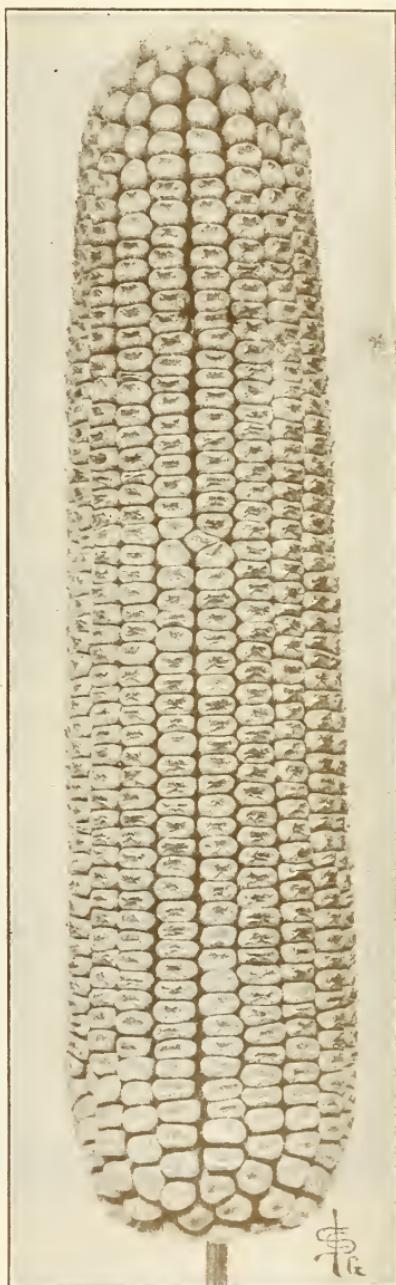


FIG. 5.—A \$150 ear of corn.

A Girls' All-Star Club will also be formed in connection with the garden and canning club work, the requirements for membership as applied to their club work being similar to the requirements stated

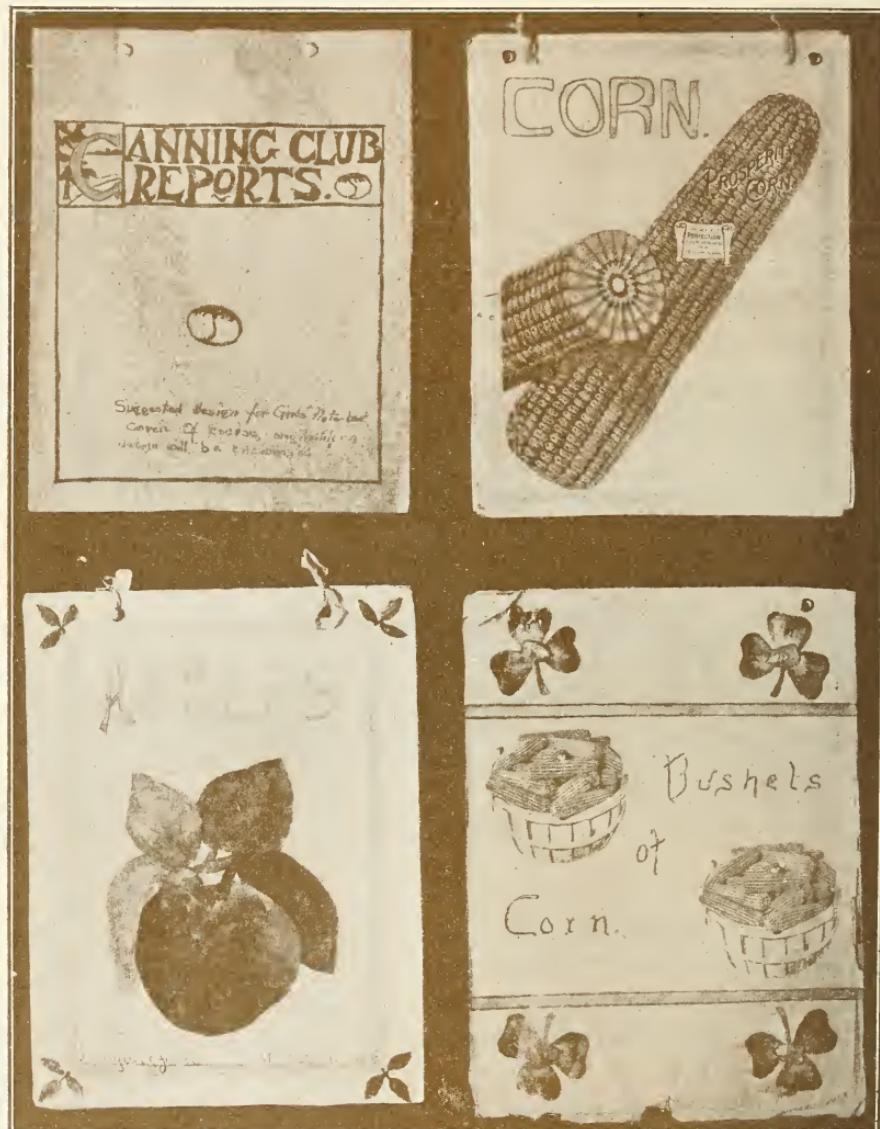


FIG. 6.—Booklets of club members describing how their crops were made.

above. Instructions for organization will be sent upon application to the Office of Farm Demonstration, Bureau of Plant Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

## PRIZES AND PREMIUMS.

The following are offered as suggestions as to what will constitute suitable premiums to be given for club work:

- (1) Free trips and expenses paid to district and State fairs, educational institutions, and State corn shows.
- (2) Free trips and expenses paid for State winners to Washington, D. C., or National Corn Show.
- (3) One or more acres of land, with clear title to same (to encourage the appreciation of land ownership and good investments).
- (4) Farm implements, tools, equipment, etc.
- (5) Thoroughbred pigs, cattle, horses, and mules.
- (6) Club emblems, banners, and pennants.
- (7) Manual-training workbench and set of tools.
- (8) Poultry equipment, such as incubators, watering and feeding troughs, brooders, fencing, and gates.
- (9) Free tuition to agricultural and mechanical colleges and county short courses. (This may include all expenses.)
- (10) Canvas tent, camp outfits, canoe, fishing equipment, and baseball suit.
- (11) Dictionary, encyclopedia, set of agricultural books, and series of well-selected home library books.
- (12) Subscriptions to farm journals, magazines, and special periodicals for boys.

NOTE.—Cash prizes and a few large premiums for one locality should not be encouraged. Better results can be secured by giving a number of small premiums. Do not establish a precedent in prize giving that can not be continued indefinitely into the future. The free prize trips to Washington, D. C., should be limited to the two highest in the agricultural district or State. The prize trips awarded to larger groups should be made to short courses, State institutions, State fairs, and corn shows.

## SPECIAL CIRCULARS AND BULLETINS.

During the corn-club season special instructions and helpful Farmers' Bulletins will be mailed directly to the club members by the United States Department of Agriculture. In order to do this it will be necessary for the Department to have on file a duplicate list of club members for every State and county. This does not interfere in any way with the special instructions prepared by the State agent in cooperation with the extension department and experiment station.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the regular club circulars available from both the United States Department of Agriculture and the State agencies, the following Farmers' Bulletins will be especially helpful in corn-club work: 192, Barnyard Manure; 229, The Production of Good Seed Corn; 253, The Germination of Seed Corn; 257, Soil Fertility; 272, A Successful Hog and Seed-Corn Farm; 303, Corn Harvesting Machinery; 313, Harvesting and Storing Corn; 325, Small Farms in the Corn Belt; 408, School Exercises in Plant Production; 409, School Lessons on Corn; 414, Corn Cultivation; 415, Seed Corn; 428, Testing Farm Seeds in the Home and in the Rural School. B. P. I. Circular No. 95. The Seed-Corn Situation; and B. P. I. Circular No. 104, Special Contests for Corn-Club Work, should also be used.

Other helpful circulars of information on corn may be secured from the State experiment station and extension department. Application for available publications on this subject should be made to the State organizer.

**COUNTY LEADERSHIP.**

The county superintendent of schools and the county agent in charge of field studies and demonstrations are by virtue of their positions considered the special county leaders in the boys' corn-club work and will cooperate with the State leader in field studies and demonstrations and the State agents in charge of club work. They should be especially interested in securing the interest of one man either as a demonstrator or cooperator in the boys' corn-club work for every boy who is a club member.

**A MAN FOR EVERY BOY.**

One of the most important phases of our work is the stimulating of partnership interest between parent and child. In order to encourage this particular phase of our work we urge that wherever a boy has been interested in the corn-club work an effort be made to secure his father or a neighbor as a cooperator with the boy in the acre-plat corn work. The aim in this work should be "A man for every boy" and in the girls' club work "A woman for every girl."

The adult cooperator should agree to cooperate with the club member in promoting the best interests of the farm and better agriculture and, if possible, to demonstrate upon one or more acres the best known methods of corn culture. The boy as a corn-club member is a demonstrator for the State and the United States Department of Agriculture and it is his business to show the best methods of growing an acre of corn. The cooperator is a man who will agree to cooperate with the boy and the State and Government officials in getting the best possible results from this club work. Names of cooperators should be submitted on separate lists and should be denominated as Cooperators in the boys' corn-club work.

**COUNTY AND FIELD MEETINGS.**

It is urged that county meetings of special instruction in corn work, such as methods of cultivation, seed selection, seed judging, seed testing, use of improved machinery, fertilizers, soil building, etc., should be held at least once a year, and an effort should be made to secure the attendance of all of the club membership of the county and to invite to this meeting men who are capable of giving instruction in a simple but forceful way for the benefit of the boys in the club work. Application should be made to the extension department of the State agricultural and mechanical college and experiment station through the State agent in charge of club work.

During the growing period of the crop local leaders should arrange to hold field demonstration meetings for the purpose of giving instruction and studying the conditions of the club acres in the field.

In this way it is possible to study the weeds, the methods of cultivation, the destruction of insects, and the treatment of diseases, and also the proper method of selecting seed from the mother stalk before early frost. These meetings may be called by the county superintendent, county agent, or rural teacher. Some one who is capable and well informed should be present for the purpose of giving specific and valuable information to the boys.

The success of the boys' corn-club work depends most largely upon the efficiency of local leadership. In conducting agricultural-education trains it is always advisable to have a special car denominated as the "Boys' and Girls' Club Car." In this car special instructions in corn and potato club work, demonstrations in home canning with canning outfits, the manufacture of potato starch, etc., can be given.

#### SECURING SUITABLE PHOTOGRAPHS.

It is very important that good, sharp photographs be taken of the club work in the various counties and districts of the State. These photographs should be carefully planned and should teach a valuable lesson in connection with corn culture. Photographs should be obtained showing comparisons of last year's crop under the old method of few and deep cultivations as compared with this year's crop under the new method of many and shallow cultivations or showing two crops grown the same year, one with the old and the other with the new method; also photographs showing the club exhibit, the club winners, and their premiums should be obtained if possible. Every club member should be induced to give a report to the State agent of all interesting things that happen in connection with his club work and his corn-club experience.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR FAIRS.

The educational value of a large club exhibit placed at the county, district, or State fair is not easily estimated. In addition to this the boys' and girls' club work should not only be exhibited at fairs but also at summer Chautauquas, farmers' institutes, short courses, teachers' associations, etc. The value of such an exhibition building as that shown in figure 7 is readily understood. This is the corn palace of the Alabama State Fair and is built entirely of corn.

The summer Chautauquas offer a splendid opportunity for the conducting of a summer camp for the State boys' and girls' club work. A morning session of special instruction for both boys and girls can be given in the club line. The State fair boys' and girls' club camp is also an important factor in agricultural education and should be encouraged and promoted at every State fair. A number of State fairs have already organized such a camp and have made a splendid

record in the interest of agriculture through the boys and girls during the past two or three seasons. The National Corn Show at Columbia, S. C., to be held in January, 1913, has made elaborate preparations for special instruction along this line. More than 500 corn-club boys will constitute the corn-show school. The membership will be



FIG. 7.—The Corn Palace at the Alabama State Fair.

made up of delegates or winners for various counties and the entire State of at least 15 States. This feature of special instruction should be encouraged in all States in connection with both State fairs and corn shows.



